

Khe Net Proposed Nature Reserve

Alternative site name(s)

Rao Net

Province(s)

Quang Binh

Status

Proposed

Management board established

No

Latitude

18°02'N

Longitude

105°58'E

Bio-unit

05c - North Annam



Conservation status

In 1994, BirdLife International conducted a field survey in the lowland forests of central Vietnam, with the aim of identifying a suitable site for the conservation of endemic pheasant species, including Vietnamese Pheasant *Lophura hatinhensis* and Imperial Pheasant *L. imperialis*. Based on the results of this survey, BirdLife recommended establishing a nature reserve at Khe Net, in Quang Binh province, with the objective of protecting the only known population of Vietnamese Pheasant in the world (Eames *et al.* 1994).

In 1999, following their review of the Special-use Forests network of Vietnam, BirdLife and FIPI reiterated the proposal to establish a nature reserve at Khe Net (Wege *et al.* 1999). Following this proposal, BirdLife and FIPI conducted a biodiversity survey and socio-economic assessment of Khe Net in 2000, in order to collect data for a feasibility study for the establishment of a nature reserve at the site. The feasibility study will be published in early 2001, and will propose that a nature reserve be established with a total area of about 23,600 ha (Le Trong Trai *et al.* in prep.).

The Khe Net area is currently under the management of Tuyen Hoa Forest Enterprise (Le

Trong Trai pers. comm.). Khe Net is not included on any government decision regarding the Special-use Forests system (MARD 1997). The future establishment of a nature reserve at the site is dependent upon an investment plan being prepared, and being approved by Quang Binh Provincial People's Committee and MARD.

Topography and hydrology

Khe Net proposed nature reserve is located in Tuyen Hoa district in the lowlands of north-central Vietnam. The topography of the proposed nature reserve is characterised by low hills, at elevations below 400 m. The largest watercourse running through the site is the Khe Net stream, which forms part of the watershed of the Gianh river. The Khe Net stream is fed by five main streams: the Khe Che, Khe Mon, Khe Lanh Anh, Khe Da Mai and Khe Bui Nhui. These streams all originate on the low ridge that forms the boundary between Ha Tinh and Quang Binh provinces.

Biodiversity value

Khe Net is contiguous with Ke Go Nature Reserve, which lies in Ha Tinh province to the north. The two sites combined support one of the largest remaining tracts of lowland evergreen forest in the Annamese Lowlands Endemic Bird Area (EBA). This EBA

supports nine restricted-range bird species, five of which occur in the Khe Net-Ke Go area: Vietnamese Pheasant, Imperial Pheasant, Crested Argus *Rheinardia ocellata*, Short-tailed Scimitar Babbler *Jabouilleia danjoui* and Grey-faced Tit Babbler *Macronous kelleyi* (Stattersfield *et al.* 1998, Le Trong Trai *et al.* 1999). Most notably, the Khe Net-Ke Go area is the only area in the world known to support a population of the globally endangered Vietnamese Pheasant (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 1999).

The vegetation of Khe Net proposed nature reserve is a mosaic of undisturbed and selectively logged lowland evergreen forest. Most of the ridge-tops in the proposed nature reserve are covered by tall forest, with a closed canopy, and, despite the fact that large timber trees have been selectively extracted in many areas, the forest retains an essentially primary character. Degraded forest areas usually occur on steeper slopes, and are often mixed with areas of secondary forest and tall bamboo. Most of the forest on flatter areas in the eastern part of the proposed nature reserve has been logged, and is now replaced by secondary vegetation types, with few tall trees and large numbers of palms (Le Trong Trai *et al.* in prep.).

The composition of the flora of Khe Net proposed nature reserve is similar to that of Ke Go Nature Reserve. A total of 566 vascular plant species have been identified at the site, ten of which are listed in the *Red Data Book of Vietnam*, including *Sindora tonkinensis*, *Parashorea chinensis*, *Cinnamomum parthenoxylon*, *Manglietia hainanensis* and *Calamus platyacanthus* (Le Trong Trai *et al.* in prep.).

The mammal fauna of Khe Net is characterised by high species diversity but low abundance. Several globally threatened species that have been recorded at the site are believed to occur at very low densities as a result of high hunting pressure. These include Gaur *Bos gaurus* and Southern Serow *Naemohedus sumatraensis*. During the BirdLife/FIPI survey in 2000, a population of Ha Tinh Leaf Monkey *Semnopithecus francoisi hatinhensis* was discovered at Khe Net. This discovery is of great conservation significance, as it is the first time in Vietnam that this primate has been recorded away from the Phong Nha-Ke Bang limestone area. In addition, the BirdLife/FIPI survey recorded the recently described large mammal,

Giant Muntjac *Megamuntiacus vuquangensis*, at the proposed nature reserve (Le Trong Trai *et al.* in prep.).

Conservation issues

In the past, human pressure on the forest along the Ha Tinh-Quang Binh provincial border was intense. In the past five years, however, selective logging and non-timber forest product (NTFP) exploitation appear to have subsided somewhat. Since 1997, the focus of the activities of Tuyen Hoa Forest Enterprise has shifted away from exploitation and towards forest protection and natural regeneration. Hunting, however, continues to be a problem at Khe Net, and threatens to eradicate a number of species of global conservation concern, unless measures are rapidly implemented to control it (Le Trong Trai *et al.* in prep.).

Other documented values

The forest at Khe Net performs an important watershed protection function for the Gianh river. Khe Net proposed nature reserve also provides an important NTFP resource for local communities, particularly palm leaves, which are a major source of income for many households in the surrounding area.

Related projects

With funding from the national 661 Programme, Tuyen Hoa Forest Enterprise is currently implementing a forest regeneration and protection programme at the site.

Literature sources

Eames, J. C., Lambert, F. R. and Nguyen Cu (1994) A survey of the Annamese Lowlands, Vietnam, and its implications for the conservation of Vietnamese and Imperial Pheasants *Lophura hatinhensis* and *L. imperialis*. Bird Conservation International 4(4): 343-382.

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Le Trong Trai, Nguyen Huy Dung, Nguyen Cu, Le Van Cham and Eames, J. C. (1996) [[An investment plan for Ke Go Nature Reserve, Ha Tinh province, Vietnam: a contribution to the management plan](#)]. Hanoi: BirdLife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute. In Vietnamese.

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Vietnam News (2000) Vietnam to double conservation areas with new reserve. Vietnam News 7 October 2000.